

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 038951 TOSEC 020155
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FOR CARTER FROM S/PRS

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SOPN (VANCE, CYRUS R.)

SUBJECT: NEW YORK TIMES, SATURDAY, 19 FEBRUARY

NO. 26

HEREWITH EXCERPTS FROM TIMES ARTICLE BY CHARLES MOHR
FROM WASHINGTON, HEADLINED, "U.S. TRIES TO MINIMIZE IMPACT
OF REPORT ON CIA AID TO HUSSEIN". BEGIN: CARTER ADMINI-
STRATION SOUGHT TODAY TO MINIMIZE POSSIBLE IMPACT ON ITS
ME DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS OF PUBLISHED REPORTS THAT CIA HAD
MADE SECRET PAYMENTS TO JORDAN'S KING HUSSEIN FOR 20 YEARS.

WHITE HOUSE ISSUED A STATEMENT PRAISING KING AS AN "OUT-
STANDING NATIONAL LEADER" WHO HAD "PLAYED A CONSTRUCTIVE
ROLE IN REDUCING TENSIONS IN ME." AT SAME TIME, IT DECLINED
TO CONFIRM OR DENY PUBLICLY REPORT PUBLISHED TODAY IN
WASHINGTON POST.

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PAGE 02 STATE 038951 TOSEC 020155

PRIVATELY, SEVERAL SOURCES CONFIRMED THAT PAYMENTS OF
MILLIONS OF DOLLARS HAD BEEN MADE AND THAT CARTER HAD ORDERED
PAYMENTS HALTED. SEVERAL ADMINISTRATION SOURCES MADE IT
CLEAR THAT CARTER HAD BEEN PERSUADED THAT HE COULD NOT CON-
FIRM PAYMENTS, FOR WHICH HE WAS NOT RESPONSIBLE, BECAUSE OF
DIPLOMATIC EMBARRASSMENT TO KING HUSSEIN.

...MEANWHILE, INTELLIGENCE OFFICIALS SAID IN WASHINGTON DURING DAY THAT IN ADDITION TO PAYMENTS TO KING HUSSEIN, CIA OVER YEARS HAD GIVEN MONEY DIRECTLY TO A NUMBER OF OTHER FOREIGN LEADERS. THOSE MENTIONED INCLUDED CHIANG KAI-SHEK, THE LATE CHINESE NATIONALIST LEADER.

ONE SOURCE REPORTED THAT SECRET PAYMENTS TO KING HUSSEIN, DATING FROM 1956, HAD BEEN RUNNING IN RECENT YEARS IN NEIGHBORHOOD OF 700 TO 750 THOUSAND DOLLARS A YEAR. CARTER STOPPED PAYMENTS A FEW DAYS AGO.

IN AN ARGUMENTATIVE AND PROLONGED WHITE HOUSE NEWS BRIEFING AT MIDDAY, POWELL, SPOKESMAN, ATTEMPTED TO TURN ASIDE QUESTIONING ABOUT PAYMENTS. DISCLOSURES ABOUT KING, WITH WHOM SECSTATE VANCE HAD CONFERRED EARLIER IN DAY IN JORDAN CAME AT AN ACUTELY EMBARRASSING TIME DIPLOMATICALLY SINCE U.S. HOPES FOR A CLOSER ASSOCIATION BETWEEN KING HUSSEIN AND PALESTINIAN LEADERS AS A WAY TO OVERCOME AN IMPASSE IN FURTHER DISCUSSIONS OF AN ISRAELI-ARAB SETTLEMENT.

HARTMAN

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